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NOTES ON THE ELIZABETHAN THEATRES

BY THORNTON S. GRAVES

1. THE ELIZABETHAN AUDIENCE

(a) *The Gallant on the Stage*

Descriptions of the gallant who occupied the stage and disturbed audience and actors by displaying his clothes, commenting on the play, flirting with females in the boxes, etc., are frequent in English literature from Dekker's gull to the Fine Gentleman in Garrick's *Lethe*.¹ The character is such an interesting one, however, that several little known passages may be quoted as corroborative evidence for the substantial accuracy of such well known descriptions as Dekker's *Gull's Hornbook* (Chap. vi), Jonson's *Devil Is An Ass* (I: 3), Cowley's *Love's Riddle* (III: i), F. Lenton's *The Young Gallant's Whirligig* (1629), Brathwaite's *Whimzies* (ed. Halliwell, p. 40), H. Fitzgeoffrey's *Notes from Black Fryers* (1620).

In his interesting rogue-story, *The Life of A Satyricall Puppy Called Nim* (1657), Thomas May has his hero plot to make his fortune by marrying a rich wife:

Which [i. e., plot] was, that I should go to see a Play in *Black-Fryars*: and there (by all necessary consequences, or rather inspired assurance) some rich Lady would cast her Eie on me, and the same night me on her. . . . Fifty Pounds accoutred me from Top to Toe: having been very thrifty in laying out my Money, and carefull to refuse *Bunges* advice, for he brought me a *Taylor*, whom Custome had made to steale from himself. A slave that the Devill durst not trust with his old Clothes; no, though he might gaine his Soul in lue of the Theft.

Thus like a true *English-man* (who wears his Mother too much in his Apparell) I enter'd the *Theater*, and sat upon the Stage: making low Congies to divers Gentlemen; not that I knew them, but I was confident, they would requite me in the same kinde: which made the Spectators suppose us of very olde, and familiar acquaintance. Besides (that I might appear no *Novice*) I observ'd all fashionable Customs; As deliv-

¹ For representative descriptions of the Restoration gallant see Shadwell's *The Humourists* and "The Character of a Town-Gallant" (1675), reprinted in Vol. II of Hindley's *Old Book Collector's Miscellany*.

ering my Sute to a more apparant view, by hanging the Cloak upon one Shoulder; or letting it fall (as it were) by chance. I stood up also at the end of every *Act*, to salute those, whom I never saw before. Two *Acts* were finished before I could discover any thing, either for my Comfort then, or worth my relation now. Unless it were *punycall* absurdity in a Country Gentleman: who was so caught with the naturall action of a Youth (that represented a ravish'd Lady) as he swore alowd, he would not sleep untill he had killed her ravisher: and how 'twas not fit such Rogues should live in a Commonwealth. This made me laugh, but not merry.

Anon after, I spied a Gentlewomans Eie, fix'd full upon me. Hope and Despaire threw me into such Distractions, that I was about to bid a Boy (who personated *Cupid* in the Play) to shoot at her with his counterfeit Arrow. But she presently disclaimed me her Object: and with the like inconstancy gaz'd upon another. About the beginning of the Fourth *Act*, my Face withstood a fresh encounter, given me by a Ladies Eie, whose Seate opposed mine. She look'd steadfast on me, till the Play ended; seeming to survey my Limbs with amorous curiosity: whilst I advanced them all, to encounter her approbation. A great desire I had to see her Face: which she discovered, by unmasking it to take her leave of a Gentleman. But if I ever beheld one so ill-favour'd? do thou abhorre my Book. She look'd like *December*, in the midst of *April*, old and crabbed in her Youth. Her Nose stood towards the *South-East* point: and *Snot* had fretted a preposterous *Channell* in the most remote corner of her Lip. Sure she was chaste, chaste because *deformed*: and her *deformitie* (repugnant to the common course of Nature) might beget that *Chastitie*: but in whom? in others, not in her self; unless Necessitie did force it. For no doubt she would be as leacherous as the Mountaine-Goate, had not Natures qualmishnesse proved a strong contradiction to her desires: who heaved the Gorge, at her *imperfect* perfecting: therefore had no Stomach to make a Man fitting her embracements. Yet she wore *Jewells*, for the which I could willingly have kiss'd her in the *dark*. And perhaps too (by *guilded* provocation) supplied the office of a Husband.

Her ugliness made me suppose that nothing could be too base for her acceptance: therefore I (following her down the Staires) resolved to discover a good-will to her, either by a wanton gesture of my Body, or whispering in her Ear just as she came forth into the Street, (her Usher being step'd aside to complement with parting Company) I proffer'd my service to attend her home, if she missed any of her Friends. She suspecting that I thought her to be a Whore, told me aloud I was much mistaken. Her Brother (unknown to me) stood behind us, and asked her; what the matter was? M'arry (quoth she) this Gentleman takes me for some common Creature. He with all violent dexterity struck me on the Face; and afterwards went about to draw his Sword. But I slunk through the presse of people, and very *tamely* conveyed my selfe home. My Man *Bunge* (who attended there all the Play-time, to save charges) saw this; and heard the *Young-Gallant* swear (after I was gone) if ever he met me, he would make my Heart the *Scabbard* of his Sword. These

woful tydings hee brought to my Chamber, so that my costly *Experiment* was now concluded, any my glorious Garments altogether uselesse. For I dust not visit *Theaters* any more, lest I should meete with him, or Women elsewhere, as fearfull of the like Entertainment" (pgs. 102-107).

Two minor descriptions may be added. In his essay "Of Affectation" the author of *Horae Subsecivae* (1620) thus describes returned travelers: "At *London* being arrived, they are sure to make their first appearance with their last sute upon the Stage, there practice, their complement and courtesies upon all their acquaintance, make three or foure forced faces, thence upon their *Curtoe*, with a Page and two Lacqueys all in a Livery, goe to the Taverne, finde fault with all the Wine, and yet be drunke," etc. Richard Brathwaite in *The Honest Ghost* (published 1658 but written, says the author, twenty-four years earlier) speaks of the gallant in the following terms:

Go see a *Play*, and when each *Act* doth end,
Rise from his *Stoole* to commune with his friend;
Of purpose to induce those that sit neer
To think it's *State* that they discourse of there;
When, 'las, poor *Stage-gulls*, they'r so far from that,
As they ne'er knew what such things aymed at:
Then to make choice where they will sup that night
And make their life a progresse of delight. (pg. 25).

(b) *The Lady of Fashion*

The passage quoted above from May is only one among many which indicate that ladies of fashion, like the gallant, frequented the Elizabethan theatres not only to hear "wise maxims" and "deceive idleness" but to display the latest fads in female costume and flirt with the men of fashion seated on the stage. It will be remembered, for example, that a character in *Lady Alimony* (I, 2) speaks of "our boxes by ladies of quality and of the new dress crowdingly furnished," and that Anne demands in *The City Madam* (II, 2):

A friend at court to place me at a masque;
The private box ta'en up at a new play
For me and my retinue, a fresh habit,
Of a fashion never seen before, to draw
The gallants' eyes, that sit on the stage, upon me.

The extent to which ladies sometimes bedecked themselves pre-

paratory to attending the play is brought out by one of Sir John Harington's epigrams:²

A Lady of great Birth, great reputation
Cloathed in seemly & most sumptuous fashion:
Wearing a border of rich Pearle and Stone,
Esteemed at a thousand crownes alone,
To see a certaine Interlude, repaires,
Through a great preasse, up a darke paire of staires.*
Her Page did bear a Torch that burnt but dimly.
Two cozing mates, seeing her deckt so trimly,
Did place themselves upon the stayres to watch her,
And thus they laid their plot to cunny-catch her.

Richard Brathwaite, who, like Gosson and Northbrook, had warned young ladies against the dangers of the theatre, writes frequently of the conduct of the lady of fashion at the playhouse. In his "character" of the gentleman usher in *Ar't Asleepe Husband? A Boulster Lecture* (1640), he says:

It is rather his Element to be versed in the perusall of *Play-bills*, which he presents to his Lady with great *devotion*; and recommends some especiall one to her view, graced by his owne judicious approbation. His choyce she admits: to the Playhouse she resorts: enters a prime box, and upon cloze of every *Act*, gracefully whispers in her *Ushers* eare; commends their action, and now and then at some amorous-moving passage, plays at *Cent-foot* purposely to discover the pregnancy of hir conceit. At Night, if her *Gentleman* heare of a Court-Maske, Show, or some other Presentment of State; Cupid be their Guide, winged is their speed, eager is their Spirit, swifter is their Pace, so they may enjoy the Object that may please, and cloze their dayes prelude on Earth, with an Evening enterlude of Courtly mirth. But here, this *Gentleman Usher* must shew himselfe rough, that he may get his Lady better roome. He must puffe and looke big, and swell like a pageant of State. A soft spirit would barre them both of all entertainment. By this his Lady h'as got a place, which was his Master-prize (pp. 163-164).

* No. 36, Bk. III, ed. 1633.

² Can this be a reference to the north entrance "over the great yard" to the second Blackfriars? Compare Nim's assertion above that he followed the lady "down the Staires" before accosting her and the epilogue to the 1649 quarto edition of Davenport's *Love and Honour*, which was acted at the Blackfriars:

"Our poet waits below to hear his destiny:
Just in the entry as you passe, the place
Where first you mention your dislike or grace."

Again, in his *The History of Moderation* he is probably describing the ladies of Charles II's reign rather than those of the time of Charles I, yet the passage is worth quoting in this connection. Speaking of the daughters of Politicus, he says:

Goodly Ladies they were indeed all four, and as great Gallants as were either in Court or City: But to tell you how they spent their time, and what was their employment, would be a strange story to tell our Grandmothers, were they alive again, and much more strange to the old Christian Ladies that lived longer before them. Their *morning* was all taken up with *Pressing, Painting, Powdering*: The *afternoon* usually spent in *Visits* or a *Play-house*; and at *night* a *Pack of Cards*: These were the Books they were most read in, and had them more in their hands, then either *Bible, Sermon, or Prayer-book*; and indeed all of them did more frequent the *Play-house* then their *Parish-Church*, the *Prayer-house*, and were more attentive there then here: Twice or thrice a moneth was fair to come to *Church*; but at a *Play* three or four times a week was ordinary: To *Church* they came to *see* and to be *seen*, and that usually when *Sermon* or *Prayers* were half ended; but to the *Play-house* they went to *learn*, and came in with the first, and staid it out without tediousness, as never thinking a *Grace* or *Sermon* too short, or a *Play* too long.

Rabbi Ben-Johnson was highly in their Books, and they more versed in his Writings, then either Rabbi *Ben-Syrack*, or Rabbi *Solomon* (pp. 70-71).

According to the same author,⁴ ladies such as those described above did more than simply "learn" or flirt in the playhouse; for says Malice, they could sometimes find it in their hearts "to bestow the choice of a Lover" upon some "Active Roscius breathing life in his Actions." And according to a marginal note in Prynne's *Histriomastix* such ladies were sometimes known to smoke publicly at the theatre. That the Puritan apparently had good reason to be shocked is revealed by a dialogue in *Two Wise Men and all the Rest Fools* (III, 2), where a certain "lady" known secretly to a barber and courtier possesses an excellent quality of tobacco. Some of it, asserts the barber, she is willing to part with, but she "reserves store of it for her owne speciall use in times of necessitie, as of attendance in Court, hearing of Plaies, sitting at Cards, and the like."

(c) *Pippins and Nuts*

From a number of sources it is well known that pippins were not only sold in the Elizabethan theatres but frequently hurled upon the stage by certain elements in the audience. As would

⁴ *Ar't Asleepe Husband*, pp. 282-283.

naturally be expected, the price of such fruit was somewhat exorbitant in the theatre; consequently certain persons bought their fruit on the outside and took it to the play with them. This fact is revealed in Wye Saltonstall's character ⁵ of "A Lawyers Clerke": "At a new play hee'le be sure to be seene in the threepeny Roome, and buyes his pippins before he goes in, because hee can have more for mony."

The practice of eating nuts in the public theatres is frequently referred to,⁶ but the following passage from Edmund Gayton's *The Art of Longevity* (1659) will be pardoned, not only because it throws a little more light upon this ancient playhouse pastime, but because it is a clear and unmistakable reference to inter-act music in the public theatres:⁷

In Hazel-nut, or Filberd, cold and dry
Of temper, doth a windy moysture lye,
Which yeilds but little nourishment, so rough,
It will not pass the stomach soon enough,
But lies like bullet, or small shot of lead,
Yet upon these the vulgar sort do feed.
And at the Playhouses, betwixt the Acts,
The Musick Room is drown'd with these Nut-cracks.

2. THE ELIZABETHAN PLAYBILL

In view of the elaborate study of the pre-Restoration playbill by Mr. W. J. Lawrence,¹ a detailed discussion of the subject is by no

⁵ *Picturae Loquentes* (1631), D3.

⁶ Cf., for example, Fletcher's *Wit without Money* and the prologue to Shirley's *Doubtful Heir*.

⁷ Another unmistakable reference to inter-act music in public theatres occurs in the same writer's *Notes on Don Quixot* (p. 272), a passage which is also interesting as a bit of early dramatic criticism. Speaking of the incongruities and absurdities of "our owne stage," he says that the theatre has been "a long time us'd to historical arguments, which could not be dispatched but by Chorus, or the descending of some god, or a Magitian: As in the plays of *Bungy*, *Bacon*, and *Vandarmast*, the three great Negro-mancers, Dr. Faustus, Chinton of England, and the like. Every act being supported by some long narrative, which was the Apology for the soloestical appearances of children, become men in an instant, within the space of two musicks, infants, and great Commanders: And sometimes without any regard to the credit of their Histories (as in the play of Adam and Eve) the good grandam is brought in with two or three waiting maides attending her, and in Paradise too, when there were but two in all the world."

¹ *Elizabethan Playhouse and Other Studies*, Second Series, pp. 57-91.

means necessary at the present time. A few notes, however, may be of interest in supplementing in a small way the extensive data brought together in the article just mentioned.

Since the publication of Mr. Lawrence's study, a document has come to light which has preserved no doubt the original phraseology of what is probably a typical playbill employed by Elizabethan traveling actors. The poster in question is noteworthy for its brevity and directness, resembling closely the familiar Restoration playbill read by the prologue-speaker in Tuke's *The Adventures of Five Hours*.

Under April 26, 1625, the following entry occurs in the Norwich Mayors' Court Books as a part of the interesting account of the attempt of Francis Wambus and his fellow-players to act in the city in spite of the express wish of the mayor: "This day wakefield haueing brought to Mr Maior a note wch he found fastened vpon the gate of the hous of Thomas Marcon beinge the Signe of the white horse nere Tomeland in Norwch wherein was written these words, Here wthin this place at one of the clocke shalbe acted an excelent new Comedy called The Spanish Contract By the Princesse servants /vivat Rex/." When questioned concerning the poster Wambus confessed that "yt was his hand writinge & that he caused yt to be set vp this day."²

It will be noted that the above poster differs from the one in Tuke's *Adventures of Five Hours* by specifying the general type of play to be presented, the name of the company that was to present it, and the hour of performance. Whether the hour of performance and the name of the company were customary in the playbills of the period it is perhaps impossible to say, since the necessity of specifying these items was more obvious in the provinces than in London. We may rest assured, however, on the evidence of the Norwich poster that whenever it was necessary or desirable in London to specify the exact hour of performance or the company concerned, these details were not omitted from the metropolitan playbills. That it was the custom to specify in playbills whether the play was comedy, romance, or "direful tragedy" is brought out in the frequently quoted prologue to Shirley's *The Cardinal*.

It will also be noted that Wambus announced his comedy as *new*. That it was customary for playbills to indulge in this bit of adver-

² Murray, *Eng. Dramatic Companies*, II, 348-49.

tizing is proved by abundant evidence. Wither in his *Abuses Stript and Whipt*³ (1622) writes:

He leaves it, and will to a Sermon goe;
But, by the way a Bill he doth espy,
Which shows there's acted some new Comedy.

Henry Peacham,⁴ speaking of certain worthless sons of the rich, says that their "study" is "nothing else but the newest fashion, what Tavern to goe to dinner to, or stare at every post to see where the newest play is that afternoone"; and the prologue to the first part of Lodowick Carleill's *Arviragus and Philicia* (1639) affirms: "Wee promis'd you a new Play by our bill." That the practice of specifying in the bills whether the play was new was carried over into the Restoration is proved not only by the passage from Tuke's play but by the prologue to Chamberlaine's *Wits Led by the Nose* (1677).

In view of the evidence above, it is perhaps possible that Jasper Mayne had in mind not only the extra price of admission to a new play but also the phraseology of the poster at the playhouse door when he wrote of Jonson:

And so thy Alchemist played o'er and o'er,
Was new o' the stage, when 'twas not at the door.

This possible interpretation of Mayne's words raises the question as to whether posters were regularly displayed at the doors of Elizabethan theatres. In commenting on the passage in *Histrionastix*—"It is as dangerous to read his name at a play-door, as a printed bill on a plague door"—Mr. Lawrence writes: "This seems to settle the point [i. e., the placing of authors' names on playbills], but if it was usual to set up a bill at the playhouse door, wherein lies the saliency of the epigram?"—

Magus would needs, forsooth, the other day,
Upon an idle humour, see a play,
When asking him at door, who held the box
What might you call the play? Quoth he *The Fox*.⁵ etc.

Before commenting on the passage it will be helpful to quote the rest of the epigram:

³ Works, Spenser Society, I, 220.

⁴ *Truth of our Times* (1638), pp. 90-91.

⁵ No. 97 of Henry Parrot's *The Mous-trap* (1606).

In goes my Gen-man (who could judge of wit)
 And being asked how he liked it:
 Said all was ill, both Fox and him that played it,
 But was not he thinke you a Goose that said it?

In consequence of the general tone of the passage I should say that the saliency of the epigram possibly lies in the fact that Magus was unable to read, although he could judge the wit of a Jonson; or perhaps Parrot wishes to bring out the fact that the "Gen-man" is ignorant of theatrical customs (he goes to the play, be it noted, "upon an idle humor") and therefore naively asks the box-keeper the title of a play when it is conspicuously displayed nearby. More probably, however, Magus is one of those widespread nuisances that bore people with idle questions. Such "foolish questions" are not infrequent today; nor were they uncommon in Elizabethan times, as is brought out in H. Fitzgeoffrey's epigram:⁶

Pontus comes posting almost every day,
 And cries, How do you, Sir? Come, what's the play?
 Who doubts but much his labour he hath lost:
 I ne'er could tell no more than could the post.

This "foolish question," with the attendant repartee, appears in several jest-books of the period.⁷

Surely the Elizabethans were sufficiently businesslike to relieve by a simple device their box-keepers from the idle questions of the ignorant or indolent, especially at a time when those same box-keepers were no doubt sufficiently occupied with changing money and guarding against counterfeit coins.

In attempting to reconcile Parrot's epigram to the passage in *Histrionmastix*, Mr. Lawrence suggests that perhaps posters were not put up at the doors of the early private theatres. It is possible that the practice was not customary at a very early date, but it is hardly conceivable that theatrical people would have long denied themselves such a convenience. At any rate, there is ample evidence to show that at a later date the private houses certainly displayed their posters at their doors. Indeed, a passage in John Stephens' essay on the coward⁸ implies that bills had long been put up at playhouse doors, private as well as public:

⁶ Collier, *Eng. Dram. Poetry* (1831), III, 385 note.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *New Essayes and Characters* (ed. 1631).

Nor will I taxe Church vices . . .
 I shall but reckon the antiquities,
 Of Glosse, of Ignorance, and Simonies:
 And so repeate things mention'd long before,
 Nay things prefixt vpon each Play-house doore.

A passage in the epilogue to Davenant's *Play-house to be Let* shows that the custom was carried over into the Restoration:

The title at our dores was that which drew
 You hither by the charm of being new . . .
 You'l spoil the jest, unless the play succeed;
 For then we may, e'en let our House indeed.

In this connection it may be pointed out that, whereas no doubt posts in conspicuous spots were the favorite place for fixing play-bills, actors frequently posted their bills elsewhere, sometimes no doubt to the disgust of property owners and the city authorities. Rankin⁹ in 1587, for example, complained that the players "by sticking of their bills in London, defile the streets with their infectious filthiness"; on November 14, 1581, the Common Council ordered that the inhabitants of a certain ward be informed to prevent "anye person or persons whatsoever to sett upp or fixe anye papers or briefes uppon anye postes, houses, or others places . . . for the shewe or settinge oute of anye playes, enterludes, or pryzes."¹⁰ At a much later date Robert Heath¹¹ requested that his book be not advertized

on each wall
 And corner poost beneath the Play
 That must be acted at Black-friers that day;

T. B. says of his *Rebellion of Naples* (1649)¹² that "though Naples be the Scene, yet he plasters his bills upon the walls and gates of London"; and Flecknoe¹³ in 1653 wrote the interesting passage: "From thence passing to Black-fryers, and seeing never a Play-bil on the Gate, no Coaches on the place, nor Doorkeeper at the Play-house door, with his box like a church-warden, desiring you to remember the poor Players," etc.

⁹ *Mirror for Monsters*, folio 6.

¹⁰ Harrison, *Description of Eng.* (ed. Furnivall), iv, Supplement, p. 321.

¹¹ *Clarastella* (1650).

¹² In "To the Reader."

¹³ *Miscellania*. Quoted in *Mod. Phil.*, xiii, 519.

The question arises as to whether pre-Restoration playbills were ever more elaborate than the specimen fixed on the gate at the "Signe of the white horse" in Norwich. Since there seems to be no reason for thinking that the passage in *Histrionmastix* regarding Post-haste's name in playbills posted at the theatre door is contradicted by Henry Parrot's epigram, we may feel reasonably certain that whenever it was considered desirable the playwright's name appeared in the bill of the play. For obvious reasons it would have been bad business to herald the name of an unpopular author. Nor would it have been politic to advertise the name of an unknown dramatist, for, as Glaphorne writes in the prologue to his *Ladies Priviledge*, there are some who

Will give the play a pitious martyrdome
Ere it hath life; yet have t' excite that flame,
Only distrust in the new Authors name.

On the other hand, it would have been equally good business to set forth a popular author's name in the playbills; and Mr. Lawrence (pp. 71-72) has given sufficient evidence to show that this was sometimes done, in spite of Dryden's assertion that the first instance of the custom in England dates from 1699. To the evidence which he has brought to bear on this topic may be added the following from Shirley's "A Prologue to another of Master Fletcher's plays There" [i. e., Dublin]:

There was no summons sure: Yes, I did see
The writs abroad, and men with half an eye
Might read on every post, this day would sit
Phoebus himself, and the whole court of wit.

Again, unless the playwright's name had been inserted in the playbill, or at least made familiar to the audience by some other means, there would be no point to such prologues as those to Massinger's *The Guardian* and *The Emperor of the East*.

Mr. Lawrence is also inclined to believe (p. 64) that long, descriptive titles were wont to appear on posters, especially on those announcing the performance of tragedies and chronicle plays. He bases his argument primarily on the persistence of theatrical custom, citing instances of long titles on Restoration playbills. There seems to be some slight contemporary evidence for these elaborate, descriptive titles. Is it possible, for example, that when in 1581 the Common Council used the expression "papers or

briefes" in referring to playbills they had something in mind other than legal tautology? Brathwaite, too, has a passage in his *Survey of History* (1638) which is of interest: "Now, if the Gentle Gallant set his rest for the City, the height of his ambition is to receive instruction from *Corranto's* and *Play-bills*. These Notions must regulate the whole course of his Living" (p. 328). The passage, though doubtful, seems to imply that the gallant receives all his historical knowledge from the sources mentioned. Whether the passages just cited be of any value in this connection or not, at least there is no reason to believe that playbills may have been less elaborate, on occasion, than the somewhat detailed bills announcing fencing contests,¹⁴ bear-baitings,¹⁵ prize-shootings,¹⁶ and the cures of quacks.¹⁷

Finally, it is interesting to note that the Elizabethans rather liberally distributed their bills to advertise their plays. Marston in his *Scourge of Villainy*,¹⁸ the jest told of the actor Field,¹⁹ the passages already quoted from Shirley, Heath, and Peacham,—all attest the plentiful distribution of bills on "every post." Timon in *Lady Alimony* (I, 2) seems to have been especially lavish in advertisement as well as expectations. "But were our bills posted," he asks, "that our house may be with a numerous auditory stored? our boxes by ladies of quality and of the new dress crowdingly furnished?" And a little later, when asked the title of his play, he replies with considerable assurance: "Every post may sufficiently inform you; nay, the fame of the city cannot choose but echo it to you, so much is expected."

In consequence of Timon's assurance it may be asked whether, in addition to other methods of advertisement, he had not distributed playbills among certain female persons of the theatre. That playbills were sometimes put into the hands of individuals is proved by the well-known passage in *The Devil Is An Ass* (I, 2).

¹⁴ Cf. Nash's *Have with you to Saffron Waldon* (ed. McKerrow), p. 121; Gayton's *Notes on Don Quixote* (1654), p. 69; Hodgkin's *Rariora*, III, 53-54.

¹⁵ Cf. *Henslowe Papers* (ed. Greg), p. 106; Brome's *Antipodes*, IV, i.

¹⁶ *Henslowe Papers* (ed. Greg), Art. 42.

¹⁷ Cf. Bulkin's bill as described in Hazlitt's *Sh. Jest-Books*, III, 37-38; and note the reference to the Negromancer's "large bills" in Brome's *Cunning Lovers* (ed. 1654), III, 50.

¹⁸ Bullen's ed. of Marston, III, 302.

¹⁹ Collier, *Eng. Dram. Poetry* (1831), III, 385 note.

In connection with the passages in *Lady Alimony* and Jonson's play should be quoted the illuminating passage in Brathwaite's "character" of the Gentleman Usher: ²⁰ "It is rather his Element to be versed in the perusall of *Play-bills*, which he presents to his Lady with great devotion; and recommends some especiall one to her view, graced by his owne judicious approbation. His choyce she admits: to the Play-house she resorts," etc. In his *The English Gentlewoman* the same writer, speaking of the female who attends the theatre for show, writes: "The *Play-bills* must be brought her by her *Petitioner*: her eye views and reviews, and out of her feminine judgement culls out one from among them which she will see, purposely to be seene" (Ed. 1641, p. 299). Although the occasion was an exceptional one and the incident hardly indicative of the regular Elizabethan theatrical custom, it may be interesting to note in conclusion that in 1614 a thousand bills were printed ²¹ and distributed to advertize the wit contest at the Hope between John Taylor and Fennor, the bills including Taylor's challenge and Fennor's "answere annexed thereunto."

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²⁰ *Ar't Asleepe Husband?* (1640), p. 163.

²¹ *Fennor's Defence*, Spenser Society, p. 148.